

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6155

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 0853

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, XA, UR

SUBJ: AFRICAN VOTING WITH SOVIETS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

REF: USUN 625 (NOTAL)

1. WHILE WE HAVE OBSERVED MORE FREQUENT EXAMPLES OF SPLITS WITHIN THE AFRICAN BLOC, THERE IS MUCH EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT VOTING PATTERNS OF SPECIFIC AFRICAN STATES AT THE UN REFLECT INCREASINGLY SLAVISH SUPPORT FOR COMMUNIST GOALS. ON MANY QUESTION, THE DEDICATION OF CERTAIN AFRICANS IN LINING UP WITH MOSCOW SHOWS LITTLE DIFFERENTIATION FROM THE VOTING OF, SAY CUBA OR THE SOVIET BLOC. THE NUMBER OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES ALREADY IN THIS CAMP IS ALARMING, ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE TENDENCY OF THE RECENTLY JOINED UN MEMBERS FROM AFRICA, PARTICULARLY THE FORMER PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES, TO LINE UP IN STRAIGHT MARXIST VOTING ORDER.

2. TO A DEGREE, MUCH OF THE AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR THE SOVIETS IS ANTI-WESTERN AS MUCH AS IT IS PRO-SOVIET. AND THE US FAILURE IN ANGOLA HAS MERELY CONFIRMED THE REGRETTABLE BELIEF AMONG MANY AFRICANS THAT THE US IS NOT

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A RELIABLE PATRON. TO BE SURE, AFRICANS LIKE TO BE ON THE

WINNING SIDE AND, COUPLED WITH WHAT IS PERCEIVED TO BE A LACK OF SYMPATHY BY THE US ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN AND OTHER ANTI-COLONIAL ISSUES, THE SOVIETS ARE ABLE TO PICK UP READY SUPPORT AT THE UN. AT THE SAME TIME, THE SOVIETS HAVE EAGERLY AND SLAVISHLY FOLLOWED THE AFRICAN BANDWAGON ON CAUSES DEAR TO THE OAU, NO MATTER IF AT TIMES THERE HAVE BEEN EMBARRASSING SLIGHTS TO THEIR DIGNITY, AND INSULTING REBUFFS FROM THE AFRICANS. WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT ON KEY MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE SUCH AS THE ANTI-ZIONISM RESOLUTION AND, TO A LESSER DEGREE, KOREA, SOME AFRICAN SUPPORT AT THE UN STILL CAN BE MUSTERED, THIS IS AN INCREASINGLY RARE OCCASION. MANY AFRICANS BEHAVE AS THOUGH IT IS FAR PREFERABLE TO JOIN A GROUNDSELL OF VOTES UNBOTHERED BY PRINCIPLES OR FACTS. AND THIS GROUNDSELL MORE OFTEN THAN NOT GOES THE DIRECTION IN WHICH THE SOVIETS AND THEIR EASTERN EUROPEAN SURROGATES ARE VOTING AND PRESSURING.

3. IN FACT, THIS SUPPORT MAY WELL INCREASE AS A REACTION TO US NON-INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA. FOR INSTANCE, A PROMINENT AFRICAN DELEGATE GENERALLY SYMPATHETIC TO THE US HAS TOLD US THAT THE US CONGRESS' POSITION ON ANGOLA HAS "PUT A KNIFE TO THE THROATS OF AMERICA'S FRINEDS IN AFRICA".

4. AFRICANS AT THE UN ALWAYS PREPARED TO ECHO THE PARTY LINE IN STATEMENTS AND UNQUALIFIEDLY IN VOTING IN THE MANNER OF SOVIET SATILLITES AND STOOGES ARE: ALGERIA, BENIN, BOTSWANA, BURUNDI, CAPE VERDE, CHAD, COMOROS, CONGO, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, GUINEA, GUINEA-BISSAU, LIBYA, MADAGASCAR, MALI, MOZAMBIQUE, SENEGAL, SOMALIA, SUDAN, AND TANZANIA.

5. THOSE AMONG WHOM WE STILL HAVE SOME LEVERAGE ARE: CAR, ETHIOPIA, GABON, GAMBIA, GHANA, IVORY COAST, KENYA, LESOTHO, LIBERIA, MALAWI, MAURITANIA, MAURITIUS, MOROCCO, NIGER, NIGERIA, RWANDA, SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, SIERRA LEONE, SWAZILAND, TOGO, TUNISIA, UGANDA, CAMEROON, UPPER VOLTA, ZAIRE, AND ZAMBIA. AMONG THESE, AS DEPART-
MENT IS AWARE, OUR LEVERAGE HAS DIMINISHED MARKEDLY WITH VIRTUALLY ALL BUT CAR, GABON, IVORY COAST, KENYA, LESOTHO, LIBERIA, MALAWI, MOROCCO, SIERRA LEONE, SWAZILAND,
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TUNISIA, AND ZAIRE.

6. THIS PRESENTS A CHALLENGE INDEED FOR ALL THOSE CONCERNED WITH MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS. TO THESE AFRICAN TARGET COUNTRIES, WE MUST MAKE OUR POSITIONS CLEAR, SIMPLE, AND EARLY. RECENT TRENDS HAVE BEEN ADVERSE, AND IT IS INCREASINGLY HARD TO TURN THEM AROUND, IN WASHINGTON OR IN CAPITALS OR HERE, BUT WE MUST TRY. THE ANGOLAN EXPERIENCE

WILL NOT MAKE OUR JOB ANY EASIER.
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